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Minneapolis Corner Stores To Promote Fresh Food

The Healthy Corner Store Program focuses on low-income communities and assists convenience stores in stocking fresh produce.

MINNEAPOLIS – Minneapolis is launching a program this fall to help corner stores redesign their layouts and marketing efforts to promote fresh produce, *The Minnesota Daily* reports.

The Healthy Corner Store Program will focus on low-income communities and assist convenience stores in selling fresh fruits and vegetables.

"[The program is] a strategy to bring healthy foods into our low-income communities," said Aliyah Ali, the head program developer.

Ali said obesity is a rising problem in low income areas, as "it's easier if you're working one, two, or three jobs to get your family a pizza for five bucks" then to shop for food at a market.

VitaLife Rx Pharmacy in Northwest Minneapolis kicked off its redesign last week, according to store manager Melissa Picult.

"The problem with this neighborhood is people come in to buy soda and chips for the most part," she said.

Participating stores in the program agree to stock a minimum amount of fresh produce in exchange for help from the city with layout, marketing, and training. The idea is to make fresh foods more visible and accessible.

"[The] idea behind this program is: How can we work with existing infrastructure to bring healthier foods within the community?" Picult said. "And since we have such a huge existing base of corner stores, it was just a natural fit."